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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/30/2027

TAGS: MARR MOPS PREL PTER IZ TU

SUBJECT: ADVANCE NOTICE TO TURKISH GOVERNMENT OF
RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS ON TURKEY-IRAQ BORDER

REF: A. STATE 140527 (NOTAL)

1B. ANKARA 02592 (NOTAL)
1C. CENTCOM-EMBASSY ANKARA EMAILS

Classified By: AMBASSADOR ROSS WILSON FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) and (D).

11. (S) This is an action message. Post requires action to provide timely advance notification of US reconnaissance flights along the Iraqi-Turkish border as promised in ref a.

12. (S) As instructed, Ambassador notified D/CHOD Gen. Saygun October 16 that the U.S. planned to resume air reconnaissance flights close to the Iraq-Turkey border and that the US would notify the GOT in advance of such missions and share PKK-related intelligence. As noted in ref b, it is critically important to take affirmative action to ensure the Turks are aware of these missions in advance to preclude any misunderstanding.

13. (S) We understand from CENTCOM and CENTAF e-mails (ref c) that Turkish Air Force officials queried US counterparts on October 28 about U-2 and Global Hawk aircraft operating in Iraq within 10 NM of the Turkish border. These missions were reportedly not listed on the Air Tasking Order (ATO) that we routinely share with the GOT to ensure transparency of US air reconnaissance in Turkey's vicinity.

14. (S) Ambassador and Gen. Saygun discussed these resumed flights on October 30. Ambassador advised that we are reaching out to CENTCOM and Washington to ensure timely notification. Saygun said his priority is to avoid any incident. Local commanders in Turkey's southeast have orders to shoot at unidentified objects flying close to the border with Iraq. He urged every effort to ensure Turkey is notified in advance.

15. (S) In a time of drastically heightened Turkey-Iraq and Turkey-US tensions resulting from recent PKK attacks on Turkish military and civilians, we must be meticulous in notifying the GOT in advance of air reconnaissance in the vicinity of the Turkish border, regardless of the platform, to avoid worsening an already inflamed situation.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

WILSON